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Governor Doyle Announces Extended Unemployment Benefits

Moves swiftly to ensure additional federal benefits for Wisconsin workers

MADISON – Governor Doyle today announced extended unemployment benefits for Wisconsin workers who have exhausted their regular benefits.

“Now that Washington has acted to extend benefits, I have moved swiftly to ensure that Wisconsin workers who are eligible for additional assistance receive these benefits without delay,” Governor Doyle said. “Having authorized Wisconsin’s participation, I am directing the Department of Workforce Development to expedite claims and help these individuals get back on their feet, as we work to grow our economy and provide job opportunities.”

Governor Doyle signed an agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor giving Wisconsin access to additional Federal Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits for workers who have exhausted their regular UI benefits.

Up to 13 weeks of additional UI benefits will be available to Wisconsin citizens who have exhausted their regular UI benefits. An individual may receive the additional benefits if he or she has or had a prior regular UI claim benefit year that ended on or after May 1, 2007. Benefits are payable beginning July 6, 2008, and may continue through June 30, 2009, although no new individuals may start their claim for the additional benefits after April 1, 2009.

At the Governor’s direction, DWD staff is working to implement the program as quickly as possible. Within two weeks of enactment, DWD will contact by mail all individuals who may be eligible for the extended benefits. Initial payment after the enactment may take up to 4 weeks.

Potentially eligible individuals may now file an initial application as of July 7, 2008. Business hours to file are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and applicants may call 1-800-822-5246, 414-438-7700 or 608-232-0678.

In addition to the regular hours, the Department will provide special extended public hours on Saturday, July 12, 2008. Claims Specialists will be available to accept initial applications on Saturday July 12, 2008, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the above listed numbers.

Regular UI benefits are limited to 26 weeks with the maximum payment of \$355 per week.